

# Who's Eligible for Social Assistance?

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General Welfare Assistance  
Special Assistance  
Family Benefits  
GAINS --  
(Guaranteed Annual Income System)



Ministry of  
Community and  
Social Services  
October 1980



Hon. Keith C. Norton, Minister  
Robert D. Carman, Deputy Minister

Ministry of Community  
and Social Services

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## **General Welfare Assistance**

General Welfare Assistance provides short-term financial help to pay for necessities when an individual or a family suffers loss of income because of illness, unemployment or some other misfortune.

Application for any type of assistance should be made at the municipal social service office in the community where the applicant resides.

There are four types of financial help in the General Welfare Assistance program:

1. General Assistance
2. Special Assistance
3. Supplementary Aid
4. Work Activity Incentive Allowances

### **General Assistance**

This assistance is often referred to as 'welfare'. It is issued to those in financial need to provide for ordinary living expenses. A person qualifying for General Assistance will receive the amount for ordinary needs set out in the regulation, less any income. The amount depends on number and age of family members and shelter costs.

General Assistance is paid by cheque and is available immediately if necessary. Applicants will require an official document such as a birth certificate, passport, marriage certificate and so on for identification.

## Who's Eligible?

Any resident of Ontario may apply for general assistance, regardless of citizenship or length of residence.

You may be eligible for general assistance if you are in financial need and are:

- aged ,
- a sole support parent ,
- unable to work due to illness or disability,
- unemployed but actively seeking work ,
- a single student in elementary or secondary school not living at home (and when the administrator is satisfied that the student cannot live at home),or
- a resident in a nursing home or hostel.

## What Do You Get?

The assistance is based on the total budgetary needs, taking into account the size of the family, the age of dependents, as well as other income received. Everyone who gets assistance also receives free medical and hospital insurance and free prescription drugs.



## **Special Assistance**

Under rules set out by the municipality, special assistance is issued for certain extraordinary expenses incurred by people in financial hardship. Special Assistance may pay for:

- prescribed drugs,
- surgical supplies and dressings,
- dental services,
- prosthetic appliances, including eyeglasses,
- vocational training or retraining,
- necessary transportation,
- moving expenses,
- funerals and burials,
- necessary repairs to a home owned and occupied by the applicant,
- personal needs of those living in nursing homes, and
- any other expense (as approved by the Director of Income Maintenance, Ministry of Community and Social Services).

## **Supplementary Aid**

This provides extra money for people who are already receiving Family Benefits, Old Age Security, Spouse's Allowance, GAINS-A or a training allowance. It covers the items listed under Special Assistance and may also include such additional payments as unusually high shelter costs and other special living expenses.

## **Work Activity Incentive Allowances**

Work activity projects are municipally-operated programs to prepare individuals with personal, family and environmental barriers for training and employment.

Incentive allowances are paid to participants in approved work activity programs and are determined by the progress that a participant is making.

# The Ontario Family Benefits Program

Family Benefits allowances (FBA) are paid by cheque at the end of each month to provide funds for ordinary living expenses.

Applicants must be residents of Ontario, in financial need which is determined by examining their income and assets, and belong to one of the following groups:

- mothers bringing up children alone,
- the permanently unemployable,
- the disabled,
- the elderly,
- the blind,
- foster children,
- parents looking after their severely handicapped children at home,
- residents in institutions under *The Homes for Special Care and Developmental Services Acts*, and
- persons enrolled and participating in an assessment or training program under *The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Act*.

## What Do You Get?

On Family Benefits you receive the difference between the amount of your family's income, if any, and the amount allowed for a family of your number and ages plus:

- free medical and hospital insurance,
- basic dental care for families with dependent children,
- prescription drugs,
- eyeglasses, and
- hearing aids.

An additional sum may be paid to:

- persons in need of special diets,
- pregnant mothers, and
- the head of the family for children returning to school.

## **People in Special Residences**

People who qualify for Family Benefits and are living in a home for the aged, a charitable institution, a nursing home, or a home for retarded persons, receive an amount toward the cost of care, plus an additional sum each month as personal spending money. This comfort allowance is also given to residents of institutions for the chronically ill who qualify financially.

## **Phase-Out Program**

When a recipient or spouse accepts full-time employment and submits a voluntary withdrawal from the Family Benefits program, the recipient may receive a cash benefit of up to \$225 at the discretion of the Director of Income Maintenance, as well as drug, OHIP and dental coverage for an additional three months. The phase-out allowance is available only once a year no matter how many times the recipient returns to full-time employment.

The continued benefits are intended to help the recipient adjust to independent financial living.

## **Work Incentive Allowance (WIN)**

In addition, the recipient may be eligible for a work incentive allowance of up to \$185 per month for disabled and permanently unemployable and up to \$150 for sole support mothers depending on family size and earned income. This allowance can last up to two years and carries with it the same fringe benefits as Family Benefits does.

All FBA recipients are eligible for this program. Normally recipients should be on Family Benefits for three months before qualifying for the work incentive allowance. For more information on how the program works, contact the nearest local office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (see page 7 ).

## **Part-time Employment**

Because some recipients are only able to work part-time, the Family Benefits program allows recipients to retain a portion of the earnings.



## **GAINS-A For The Aged**

GAINS-A is a program for eligible Ontario residents age 65 and over who receive the federal Old Age Security pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

For more information, telephone the multilingual Information Centre free of charge:

In Metro Toronto, dial 965-8470

In Area Code 807, ask the Operator for Zenith 8- 2000

All other areas, dial direct: 1-800-268-7121

Those receiving GAINS for the elderly are automatically eligible for the Ontario Drug Benefit. This entitles them to receive free prescription drugs.

Persons eligible for GAINS-A who also have dependents or special needs may be entitled to receive additional allowances under Family Benefits. To find out more about this, contact the nearest office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (see page 7 ).

### **Other Services**

There are services available in addition to General Assistance, Special Assistance and Supplementary Aid, Family Benefits and GAINS. For example the local municipal office may, depending on an applicant's income, provide low-cost day care for children, or nursing and homemaker's services in the home.

Other services, include family counselling, debt and credit counselling, vocational training for the mentally or physically handicapped and legal aid.

For more information on any of these programs, contact the local adult services office of the ministry (see page 7 .)

## How To Appeal

Anyone who is refused benefits, whose benefits are reduced or stopped, or who disagrees with the level of allowance provided may appeal. The first step is to discuss the problem with your field worker.

For more information about the appeal process ask for the pamphlet entitled *How To Appeal*, which contains the various courses of action available.

Copies are available from the Social Assistance Review Board, Room M1-56, Macdonald Block, Queen's Park; Municipal Social Services offices (see local telephone directory) and offices of the Ministry of Community and Social Services

### Ministry Area Offices ( Adult Services )

#### Northern Region

*Regional Director*  
473 Queen St. E.  
2nd Floor  
Sault Ste Marie, Ontario  
P6A 1Z5  
(705) 949-8052

*Sudbury*  
111 Larch St.  
Suite 1, 8th Fl.  
Sudbury, Ont.  
P3E 4T5  
(705) 675-4541

*Thunder Bay*  
710 Victoria Ave.  
Suite 301  
Thunder Bay, Ont.  
P7C 5P7  
(807) 475-1300

*Timmins*  
P.O. Box 1720  
South Porcupine, Ont.  
P0N 1H0  
(705) 235-3363

#### Southeastern Region

*Regional Director*  
336 Alfred St. Grd. Floor  
Kingston, Ontario  
K7L 3S5  
(613) 549-5932

*Kingston*  
1055 Princess St.  
P.O. Box 970  
Kingston, Ont.  
K7L 4X8  
(613) 544-6206

*Ottawa*  
2197 E. Riverside Dr.  
Ottawa, Ont.  
K1H 7X3  
(613) 737-5520

*Peterborough*  
277 George St. N. Ste. 104B  
Peterborough, Ont.  
K9J 3G9  
(705) 748-5883

## Central Region

### *Regional Director*

110 Eglinton Ave. West  
3rd Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4R 2C9  
(416) 481-5156

### *Barrie*

70 Collier St.  
5th Floor  
Barrie, Ont.  
L4M 4Z2  
(705) 737-1311

### *Toronto*

110 Eglinton Ave. W.  
5th Floor  
Toronto, Ont.  
M4R 2C9  
(416) 965-8449

## Southwest Region

### *Regional Director*

IBM Bldg. 5th Floor  
195 Dufferin Ave.  
London, Ontario  
N6A 1K7  
(519) 438-8344

### *Hamilton*

100 Main St. East, Box 870  
Hamilton, Ont.  
L8N 3X8  
(416) 526-9300

### *London*

495 Richmond St., 6th Fl.  
London, Ont.  
N6A 5A9  
(519) 438-5111

### *Waterloo*

75 King St. S., 5th Fl.  
Waterloo, Ont.  
N2J 1P2  
(519) 886-4700

### *Windsor*

250 Windsor Ave.  
Windsor, Ont.  
N9A 6V9  
(519) 254-1651

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